

**BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS AND  
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

**April 13, 2012**

**Open Session**

**The Open Session of the Board of Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists was called to order on the above date in Room 104, Cannon Building, Rhode Island Department of Health, Three Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island, pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Open Meeting Law, so called, and other applicable provisions of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as amended. A quorum was established at 10:20 am.**

**Board members in attendance:**

**Dale Blumen**

**Joseph Costa**

**Terrence Giblin**

**Elizabeth Johnson**

**Ronald Mancini**

**Board members not in attendance:**

**Noelle Harris**

**James Pinel**

**Staff members in attendance:**

**Rosemary Sheets**

**Others Present:**

**Tiffany McClanahan**

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**The minutes of the meeting held on November 18, 2011 were presented. On motion of Dale Blumen, seconded by Joseph Costa, it was unanimously voted to accept the minutes.**

## **Business**

**The Board was informed by this Administrator that the Office of Health Professions Regulation entered into a 2012 MFT Computer Based Exam Agreement with the Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB). The last agreement on file is dated 2001. The new agreement requires that exam applicants pay the examination fee. The board remarked that the license fee for MHC and MFT licenses is much higher than comparable professional licenses and that is the reason former board administrators agreed to have Health Professions Regulation pay the exam fee for the applicants. The board was informed that Health Professions can no longer pay the exam fees but there is a bill in the legislature to adjust HEALTH license fees with some fees increased and some decreased. The Mental Health Counselor and Marriage and Family Therapist**

licenses are included in the license fees that have been reduced and if passed by the legislature, will be more equitable.

The Board provided background to this Administrator regarding the Salve Regina University Rehabilitation Counseling Masters Program and the C.A.G.S. The 2009 Administrative Hearing Final Decision that allowed a Salve Rehabilitation Counseling Graduate take the Mental Health Counselor examination was discussed. The board was informed that the applicant's license is still "pending" as the individual to date has not passed the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination of the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) examination. While the board agreed it could possibly be a result of the testing skills of the applicant it could also be an indication that the applicant had not received enough clinical background to successfully pass the examination.

Board member Terry Giblin explained that when the Salve Regina Holistic Counseling Program was first offered, it did not meet regulatory requirements, however the Board and Salve discussed what was needed and the Program is great. Tiffany McClanahan who was present at the open session to represent Salve Regina University commented that the Holistic Counseling program has been offered for quite a number of years while the Rehabilitation Counseling Program is relatively new and may need some "tweaking".

The Board offered two suggestions. Salve Regina could contact the

**RI Legislature and submit a bill to establish licensure for the Rehabilitation Counseling discipline. Alternatively, the board suggested the current Rehabilitation Counseling Program could review the curriculum and include more clinical instruction in the 48 hour Masters Program in order to meet the statute and regulation requirements. The C.A.G.S. could then provide the additional 12 credits for a total of 60 credits as required in regulation and qualify graduates for Mental Health Counseling licensure. Ms. McClanahan exited the open session following the conclusion of this discussion.**

**The board reviewed CACREP accredited programs and the Rhode Island General Law § 5-63.2 and agreed that the practicum and internship hours currently required in § 5-63.2 and The Rules and Regulations For Licensing Mental Health Counselors And Marriage And Family Therapists [R5-63.2-MHC/MFT] (regulations) are met in order to obtain a Rhode Island license. The practicum includes 18 quarter or 12 semester supervised hours and the internship is one calendar year of at least 20 hours per week that is equivalent to 1,000 internship hours.**

**The board agreed unanimously that the preference is for graduates of CACREP accredited programs to meet the practicum and internship standards in the Rhode Island regulations. On a case by case basis, if an individual makes a compelling case regarding practicum and internship requirements, the board is willing to consider it and will operate under that premise until the statute and regulations can be**

**amended.**

**There was a brief discussion of the procedure to amend the statute and regulations to employ the 2011 requirements in the AMHCA Standards For Practice of Clinical Mental Health Counseling that are consistent with accrediting requirements of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The first step in amending the statute is a discussion with the board legal counsel. It was determined that the entire process could take at least one year.**

**The board discussed recent inquiries from potential Mental Health Counselor applicants who have been employed for 20 plus years where in accordance with Section 14.0 of the regulations, licensure was exempted, and are now interested in obtaining licensure to engage in a second career. The board unanimously agreed that it would be very difficult for these individuals to meet the credits, practicum and internship required and the board further agreed there is no grandfathering of licensees.**

## **Application Review**

**There were three applications for licensure reviewed:**

**The Board advised that the first applicant, Nanci Adams, with a graduate degree in Art Therapy needs to enroll in additional courses**

**in order to demonstrate compliance with Appendix A of the Regulations.**

**The second applicant (by endorsement), Calyn G. Acebes, with a graduate degree in Transpersonal Counseling Psychology was approved for licensure.**

**The board did not review the request of the third applicant, Rita Capotosto, who had been previously advised to apply to RIC to complete the requirements for licensure. Ms. Capotosto indicated that RIC advised feedback on credentials from the board. The board suggested the applicant go to the website to see what is required and for RIC to determine what their requirements are to complete the necessary licensure requirements.**

### **Adjournment to Executive Session**

**On motion of Elizabeth Johnson, seconded by Dale Blumen, it was unanimously voted to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to sections 42-46-4 and 42-46-5(1) of the Rhode Island General Laws, as Amended, in that confidential issues of fitness for licensure and investigative cases will be discussed. The Open Session adjourned at 10:55 am.**

### **Return to Open Session**

**The Open Session was called back to order at 11:30 am.**

**On motion of Terrence Giblin, seconded by Joseph Costa, it was unanimously voted to keep confidential all matters discussed in Executive Session and to seal those minutes of the meeting inasmuch as fitness for licensure and ongoing disciplinary matters were addressed. The Board voted unanimously on the following:**

**Case # 2012-01-MHC No Unprofessional Conduct**

**Case # 2011-07-MFT The Board determined after review and discussion that the issues of a personal relationship alleged in the complaint were not founded. However, the response documents caused the board concern regarding boundary issues. The board voted that a Letter of Concern be sent to the Marriage and Family Therapist.**

**Adjournment**

**Having no further business, on motion of Ronald Mancini, seconded by Dale Blumen, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. The Open Session of the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Rosemary Sheets**

**Board Administrator, Health Professions Regulation**